

# In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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## EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Penn. Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
Phone: (202) 727-2980  
Fax: (202) 727-6561  
<http://dc.gov>

## Message from the Mayor

What better time than the Fourth of July season to celebrate what a great city and country we live in—and to think about how our city's lack of voting representation is something we must continue to fight to change.

As some readers may know, I am currently first vice president of the National League of Cities (NLC), the oldest and largest national organization representing municipal governments throughout the United States. In December, I am slated to become president of the NLC.

When I travel outside of Washington for meetings with the NLC or with other organizations such as the US Conference of Mayors, I act on behalf of the citizens of the District of Columbia in several ways. Primarily, I use my NLC position to continually spread the word about our lack of voting rights here in the District. Many people in the United States do not realize that we in the District pay federal taxes but don't have a vote in Congress.

Recently, I've also had the chance to meet with foreign journalists on the subject of voting rights. On June 30, I met with a reporter from BBC Radio, and in part we discussed the city's lack of voting rights. On July 7, I met with an Iraqi film crew that wanted to know what life was like in the nation's capital. I made sure to emphasize our lack of voting representation.

On June 23, I testified before the Committee on Government Reform in the United States House of Representatives about voting rights. I told the committee that as Mayor of the District of Columbia, I represent 570,000 disenfranchised citizens of the United States of America.

We are US citizens in every sense of the word. We die for our country in war, we are active in civic life, and we pay taxes. But this nation denies us a full voice in Congress. Our lack of representation should outrage District residents and all Americans who value equality and fairness.

Several bills have been introduced by both Democrats and Republicans in the House, including three senior and influential House members and the District's own nonvoting delegate. The bills offer a wide spectrum of alternatives for moving towards representative democracy for the nation's capital. I prefer Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton's bill, which provides representation for the District in the House and the Senate.

The United States should be a beacon around the world for the virtues and inclusiveness of democracy. That light should shine the brightest at the nation's core—right here in Washington, DC. It is the ultimate hypocrisy that DC citizens suffer from the exact disenfranchisement this nation was founded to end. Let's work together to correct this injustice.



# Uptown Destination District Strategic Development Plan

On June 24, I attended the Uptown Destination District (UDD) Final Public Meeting at the District's Housing Finance Agency Headquarters on Florida Avenue. The meeting was held to wrap up the community planning part of the process and mark the beginning of implementing the UDD Plan.

As part of our new reSTORE program, we chose the 14th and U Street and Shaw Main Street districts for continued revitalization. This plan was introduced through the Uptown Destination District Plan that calls for affordable housing, economic and business development, job training and community building and participation.

The UDD Plan nurtures our city's African-American cultural heritage assets and history within Greater Shaw/U Street. Moreover, it recommends using our history to increase opportunities for existing residents, to build community spirit, and to attract new residents and visitors to our neighborhoods.

The Uptown Destination District Plan represents an opportunity to develop another cultural district along Seventh Street/Georgia Avenue and Florida Avenue that's unique in our city—distinct from our downtown and our National Mall.

We are challenging private landholders to meet or exceed the District's development targets of 20 percent to 30 percent affordability in residential projects, local business development opportunities, and other projects. We look forward to assisting business owners in realizing their entrepreneurial dreams.

## Community Profile Marjuan Canady

As a college-bound senior majoring in Musical Theatre at The Duke Ellington School of The Arts, Marjuan Canady has served over 700 volunteer hours during her high school career. While maintaining a 4.1 GPA, she has used her artistic passion and talent to help at local nursing homes and the Hospital for Sick Children. Other volunteer experience ranges from helping to restore the Anacostia River to serving food at Martha's Table.

Serving through the Art of Healing Program at the Hospital for Sick Children in NE Washington, Marjuan has taught children to dance, paint, write, sing and act. "Involvement in the arts is a therapeutic experience for all those that participate. For the disabled children it gave them a chance to meet and interact with people through their creative gifts," Marjuan said. "It was the most influential thing I have ever done."

A majority of Marjuan's volunteer hours were spent working for the theatre at her school. During her freshman year she used her leadership skills to start the Ushering Program, mobilizing students from across the school to volunteer for various stage productions. The club is now in its fourth year and has over 35 active members.

As a musical theatre major at Duke Ellington, she has also participated in many voluntary performances across the District. Marjuan says that those experiences have made her grow "just by seeing who else lives in our community."

Marjuan has received numerous awards, including the Reverend Margaret M. Graham Volunteer Service Award by the Junior League and the Best Citizenship Award from the Theatre Department at Duke Ellington. Marjuan plans to attend Fordham University and major in theatre.

Marjuan is the February youth winner of the Mayor's Community Service Award, sponsored by Serve DC. If you would like to nominate a youth or adult for the monthly award, visit <http://serve.dc.gov> for nomination information or call (202) 727-9461.



## Safe Passages: Summer 2004 Kickoff

Smiles, laughter, music, and uplifting activities filled the air when I officially kicked off summer recreation season June 29 at Kenilworth-Parkside Recreation Center in Northeast with my legendary, award-winning, cannonball plunge.

The Safe Passages Summer 2004 kickoff festival marked an unprecedented collaborative effort between District agencies and community based organizations to provide vital recreational, academic, nutrition and employment services for local young people during the summer months.

Safe Passages is a response to the everyday challenges faced by District residents and requests for additional services during the summer months. When the school year ends, thousands of low- to moderate-income children lose access to educational and recreational resources and daily meals they receive throughout the school year.

Let me remind readers of a few things we have in store for this summer:

- Our Department of Parks and Recreation will serve 5,000 young people through its summer camps and recreation activities.
- DC Public Schools will serve an estimated 8,500 children and young people through summer school and afternoon summer programs in 54 schools.
- The DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation and other community-based organizations will provide recreational and education activities for 8,000 young people at 90 sites throughout the city.
- Last summer, more than 10,000 children enrolled in the DC Public Library's Summer Quest Reading Program. The goal for this year is to increase that number by 40 percent.

Information on all of our youth summer programs is available from the website, <http://summeryouthprogram.dc.gov>, and also by calling (202) 463-6211.



## New Website for the Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Administration

Jazz at the Corcoran, storytelling at the Smithsonian Museum of African Art, concerts at the Capitol, movies on the Mall, block parties, street festivals, and poetry slams. These are just a few of the activities featured on the recently-launched, disability-oriented website of the DC Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Administration (MRDDA).

The project, informally titled "it's hot...it's cool...it's fun...and it's (almost always) free," is a survey of what there is to do in Washington that is culturally interesting and inexpensive. Visitors to the site at <http://mrdda.dc.gov/activities/> can find an abundance of things to do every day of the week.

The focus of the site is to let people with disabilities know they are welcome in Washington, DC, and to try to answer every question they may have regarding access to events.

Click "July 4th," for instance, and you'll come across the National Symphony Orchestra concert at the US Capitol, the Mall fireworks, and the Palisades community parade. Visitors interested in music will be able to find free concerts going on around town seven days a week. Find out about the new Washington Monument hours of operation, how to get timed-tickets in advance, and parking.

When possible, each entry has a telephone number for further information, a website link, the location of the closest Metro station, and driving instructions. While the site is designed for the city's population with disabilities, MRDDA expects that many others will use it to plan their weekends, their long lunches, and what they do with their spare time.

Anyone wishing to alert MRDDA to an appropriate event or activity for inclusion on the website should contact Kathleen Donner at (202) 727-2437 or [kathleen.donner@dc.gov](mailto:kathleen.donner@dc.gov).

MRDDA is responsible for the delivery of services to approximately 1,800 District of Columbia citizens with mental retardation and developmental disabilities to help them reside with their families, or in other community living situations, and to develop functional and occupational skills.



## Wardman Court Apartments Replace Clifton Terrace

On June 29, I helped celebrate the opening of a new affordable housing development that will be a model for others we're helping develop around the District.

Clifton Terrace in Columbia Heights was built in 1918 as luxury apartments. However, in the 1980s, it became a haven for violence, prostitution and drugs. After the property was cited for more than 1,000 housing code violations and in foreclosure, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) placed a request for proposals (RFP) for its redevelopment. The Community Preservation and Development Corporation and Michaels Development Company won the RFP and purchased the property for \$1.

Now, after more than two years of renovations, the property is open and occupied by renters and homeowners, and is now called Wardman Court. It is a 228-unit mixed-income housing development that has transformed the appearance of this part of the 14th Street corridor. More importantly, the rental units are affordable to households earning less than 50 percent of the area median income.

As June was National Homeownership Month, I cannot think of a better place to celebrate the rebirth of Washington's housing market. Not too long ago, Clifton Terrace was a community eyesore. But on June 29, we joined with the community in celebrating its new incarnation in Wardman Court.

These are great times for our city's housing efforts. Last month, HUD awarded the DC Housing Authority \$20 million for the Eastgate Gardens Public Housing development on Benning Road in Southeast. This funding will result in the transformation of a 230-unit public housing project into a 269-unit mixed-income community with a Community Arts Center.

Right now, more than 34,000 units of housing have been completed or are in our production pipeline across the District of Columbia. Fifty percent of the units in the pipeline are already being built, and 11,000 of those units are affordable housing.

Last week, I attended the public meeting of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy Task Force, which—just like its name—will recommend ways to keep our affordable housing stock growing as our city's population increases. And as our city's population grows, we'll support them with financial credits and community programming.

Finally, let me say that all around Columbia Heights you can see evidence of our housing agencies' commitment to preserving affordable housing and converting vacant, blighted properties into high-quality affordable housing.

## Omnibus Public Safety Agency Reform Amendment Act of 2004

On June 24, I signed into law the Omnibus Public Safety Agency Reform Amendment Act of 2004. The legislation includes two top Mayoral initiatives to help move limited-duty disabled police officers to retirement in order to hire full-duty officers, and to allow the hiring of experienced retired detectives to assist with solving homicide cases.

Councilmember Kathy Patterson, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, joined me at the bill-signing. This legislation was introduced by Councilmember Patterson and approved unanimously by the full Council earlier this month. It was a consensus effort that involved hard work by the Council and our public safety agencies. Ultimately, the bill will help us create a safer city for our residents in a number of ways. There are several highlights of the legislation.

First, this bill strengthens the ability of our Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) to manage the use of medical leave and limited duty status by employees. This feature has been a top priority of mine. It will help us enhance the number of full-duty officers on patrol, putting out fires, or answering medical calls in neighborhoods.

Second, this bill allows MPD to hire highly experienced retired MPD detectives to assist the city's homicide closure efforts. The bill removes barriers and allows MPD to hire up to four former detectives to lend their expertise to our current homicide investigation ranks.

Third, the bill requires MPD and FEMS to establish criteria for promoting command staff and for conducting physical fitness testing for all sworn employees.

Finally, this innovative legislation requires an annual report on police and fire department misconduct and grievances.

Again, I want to thank Councilmember Patterson for her extraordinary leadership in making this happen.



## Mayor's Week in Review

### Mayor Joins Governors for Regional Meeting

On **June 25**, I joined Maryland Governor Bob Ehrlich and Virginia Governor Mark Warner for our third regional meeting, where we discussed a host of regional issues. The meeting was held in Richmond. A fourth meeting is scheduled for November here in the District.

### Mayor Attends Barbecue Battle

On **June 26**, I delivered remarks at the 12th Annual National Capital Barbecue Battle. The Barbecue Battle is the largest Barbecue Cooking Contest in the mid-Atlantic region. It is also the largest annual fundraising event for the Metropolitan Police Boys & Girls Clubs.

### Mayor Speaks to Maryland Municipal League

On **June 28**, I addressed the Maryland Municipal League in Ocean City, Maryland.

### Mayor Participates in World Bank Panel

On **June 29**, I participated in a panel discussion at the World Bank in Northwest. The panel was titled *Tackling Urban Challenges Through Professional Networks*.

### Mayor Takes Walk-Through of Eastland Gardens

On **June 30**, I walked through the Eastland Gardens neighborhood, starting at 4020 Lee Street NE and ending at Kenilworth Elementary at 44th and Ord Street. Eastland Gardens has become a popular drop off point for stolen vehicles.

### Mayor Delivers Remarks at New Visions Exhibit

On **June 30**, I delivered remarks at the opening of the New Visions photography exhibit. Students from New Visions, who are developmentally disabled, photographed me, and the outcome of the project will include a photo essay book entitled, *A Day in the Life of Mayor Williams* by Persons with Developmental Disabilities.

### Mayor Meets with Foreign Delegations

On **June 30**, I met with delegations from Nantong city, China and Afghanistan.

### Mayor Attends National League of Cities Board Meeting

July 1 – 3, I met with my colleagues on the Board of Directors of the National League of Cities in Boston, Massachusetts.

## District Activities



Mayor Williams, VA Gov. Mark Warner, and MD Gov. Bob Ehrlich held their 3rd regional meeting June 25 at the Governor's Mansion in Richmond; the 4th meeting will be in November in DC.



On June 24, Mayor Williams signed the Omnibus Public Safety Agency Reform Act, introduced by Councilmember Patterson in 2002 to help create a safer city for residents.



## Community News

- [District Establishes Office of Victim Services](#)
- [Mayor Williams Signs Public Safety Reform Act](#)
- [District of Columbia Implements New Citizen Emergency Notification System](#)

[View All News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

7/12	<b>Real Property Tax Sale</b> 8:30 am – 4 pm 941 North Capitol Street NE 4th Floor Washington, DC
7/24	<b>Help DC Adams Morgan Clean-Up Day</b> All Day 18th Street and Columbia Road, NW Washington, DC
8/3	<b>National Night Out</b> 7 am – 10 pm Various locations around town
8/14	<b>Neighborhood Corps Forum</b> 10 am – 3 pm DC Convention Center 801 Mt. Vernon Place, NW Meeting Room 144 Washington, DC

